

## **Dr Cynthia Gamble**

*John Ruskin, Henry James and the Shropshire Lads*, by Cynthia J Gamble. New European Publications Limited, London, 2008.

This fascinating book leads us to Shropshire's "beautiful little places" (John Ruskin) that inspired great writers, painters, politicians, diplomats and clergymen. In the first part of the book, John Ruskin, the greatest of the great Victorians, is presented among his stimulating circle of interesting and unusual Shropshire friends such as Broseley-born Osborne Gordon, his sister Jane and her husband John Pritchard; Edward Cheney of Badger Hall, Venice and London. Ruskin's own visits to Shropshire from an early age were inspirational: he returned and sketched among the ruins of Wenlock Priory.

In the second part of the book, Henry James, following in the steps of his fellow countryman Henry Adams, discovers Shropshire. James seeks, savours and imbibes impressions in its Abbeys and Castles, not forgetting his rambles high on Wenlock Edge with stunning views over the Shropshire countryside and Wales. James also discovers the delights of Yorkshire: Christmas in Wakefield and New Year at Fryston Hall in the company of Lord Houghton.

Much of the action and inspiration emanates from the little market town of Much Wenlock, home of Dr William Penny Brookes who inspired the rebirth of the Olympic Games in the late 19th century. The Rev. Osborne Gordon plays a pivotal role in the story. Cynthia Gamble charts his education at Bridgnorth School and his years at Christ Church, Oxford where he first met Ruskin and became a lifelong friend, to life in a parsonage at Easthampstead, Berkshire. The story takes us on many journeys around Europe with Ruskin and his Shropshire friends.

The book is beautifully illustrated with much original material provided by the author. It makes us want to revisit these places with new eyes and savour their literary history.

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*Proust as Interpreter of Ruskin: the Seven Lamps of Translation*, by Cynthia J Gamble.

In light of Marcel Proust's conflicting claims not to know English and yet be a translator, Cynthia Gamble examines in great detail his knowledge of the English language, explains why and how he succeeded in the remarkable feat of translating

into French John Ruskin's *The Bible of Amiens* and *Sesame and Lilies* in 1904 and 1906 respectively. She demonstrates convincingly the importance of Proust's reading and interpreting Ruskin for his development as a writer and the creation of his masterpiece, *À la recherche du temps perdu*.

"Cynthia Gamble provides a lucid and detailed account of the making of translation by Proust from Ruskin's œuvre. She has written a gripping, detailed and original account of Proust's elaborate translation." - *French Studies*.

"La démonstration de Cynthia Gamble est persuasive: c'est la belle conclusion d'un livre admirablement conçu et raisonné." –*Bulletin Marcel Proust*.

"Proust as Interpreter of Ruskin is a fine study that has the considerable merit of demonstrating Proust's deep engagement with Ruskin's writings, his ability to read them in the original, and his marked success in rendering them into French." - *Pre-Raphaelite Studies*. Summa Publications, Birmingham, Alabama, USA, 2002.